

March 28, 1984

LR 1

the time that budgets are worked on within an agency until final passage. It is unnecessary. It seems to me the policy is appropriate that budgets ought to have some stability in terms of programs. The...it is not necessary it seems to me from a policy matter to adjust budgets every year programmatically. The bill would assume that in the even numbered years would permit a slight adjustment, up or down, to respond to inflation or to respond to tightening up of the economy where reductions could be made but it would conceivably have limited appropriation activity during the short session. I think that is particularly important for several reasons. One of the things it seems to me that could be accommodated very appropriately is that I have noticed in the odd numbered sessions, since we went to annual sessions, that some of the more complex issues are carried over, supposedly for interim studies and then are considered in the even numbered year. I think if the budget problem, budget issue, was not so prominent in those even numbered years that much greater attention for the Legislature as a whole could be given to some of the policy difficult issues that have had interim studies. You have the same Legislature seated and I think that that would also be an advantage. Secondly, you might ask what would the Appropriations Committee then do during the even numbered years. I would envision essentially two things. One is that they would be evaluating that existing budget to make any adjustments because of the economy and, secondly and more importantly, I would view the activity of the Appropriations Committee while other committees are holding hearings of using that time for much greater in depth review or overview, rather, of a variety of agencies in preparation for introduction of legislation the following session. I think it could be very useful, very beneficial. I think the whole concept would be more efficient. I think an end result would be one of lower appropriations or lower governmental costs at least, less violent change in policies through the appropriation process. I think the concept is good and I would hope the body would advance it.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Newell.

SENATOR NEWELL: Mr. President, members of the Legislature,